



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Progress Monitoring Inspection Report**

**Delta Independent School**

**November 2023**

## School's details

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<b>School</b>	Delta Independent School
<b>DfE number</b>	840/6014
<b>Registered charity number</b>	1068064
<b>Address</b>	Delta Independent School Parliament Street Consett County Durham DH8 5DH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01207 502680
<b>Email address</b>	information@deltaindependent.school
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Hillary
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Neil Curran
<b>Age range</b>	13 to 16
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	46
<b>Date of inspection</b>	16 November 2023

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## 1. Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Delta Independent School is a co-educational day school offering alternative provision to mainstream education. It offers part-time or full-time provision to pupils from local maintained schools, pupil referral units, and the local authority who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Pupils are either dual-registered with their maintained school or registered solely with Delta Independent School.
- 1.2 The school is part of Delta North Consett Ltd, which is a registered charity. Its leadership and management since September 2022 have been overseen by a single proprietor assisted by an advisory board.
- 1.3 The school has identified 21 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupil has English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a regulatory compliance inspection in March 2023.

### Purpose of the inspection

This was an unannounced progress monitoring inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the regulatory compliance inspection in March 2023. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs).

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding);	<b>Met</b>
Part 4, paragraphs 18 to 21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors)	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	<b>Met</b>

## 2. Inspection findings

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

#### Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

#### Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 Safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively, including those related to the welfare of the pupils with SEND. Senior leaders ensure that, where appropriate, they access both timely support and guidance from the local authority in handling safeguarding matters. This is carried out in appropriate consultation with Durham Children's Inclusion Service and social services, as required. The senior leaders work closely with the school's proprietor and advisory board in ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements are in place.
- 2.5 The school provides appropriate support for pupils' needs, most especially those pupils who may be vulnerable. Staff listen to pupils and take appropriate and timely action when they raise concerns. Pupils confirmed this and their view is supported by records of safeguarding. All staff have received suitable training on the recent changes in statutory guidance, in particular regarding online safety. All staff are familiarised with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) Part 1 and Annex B. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies have sufficient status and authority to undertake their roles. They have the appropriate level of training, which is in line with local procedures. The DSL provides regular updates to all staff and opportunities to discuss any changes to safeguarding policies and their implementation.
- 2.6 Staff have a full understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They understand procedures for reporting any concerns about pupils and operate these appropriately. They are aware of the types of child-on-child abuse that can occur, including any relating to inappropriate sexual relationships. They understand the significance of reacting to and reporting such behaviours effectively and do so. The wellbeing of pupils with SEND is promoted effectively and their particular needs are taken into account in handling any safeguarding incident. The school maintains appropriate and detailed records of any safeguarding concerns. These show timely and appropriate liaison with parents and local authorities. There is an effective code of conduct for staff, which makes clear the high expectations required of all staff working in the school. In discussions, staff showed an effective understanding of the code.
- 2.7 There are appropriate measures to handle any allegations against adults working in the school. Staff understand these and are prepared to report any concerns they may have, including at a low level. The proprietor and senior leaders jointly undertake an annual safeguarding review with due diligence, assisted by a member of the advisory board. They now demonstrate suitable rigour in their oversight of arrangements. This includes, if necessary, consultation with external professionals and undertaking a review of any safeguarding incidents that may occur. The proprietor and senior leaders have all received appropriate training in safeguarding.
- 2.8 The school now obtains suitable references before staff begin work. It ensures that all staff recruited undergo the appropriate level of check related to the disclosure and barring service requirements (DBS), including for those who require an enhanced level check. If a DBS check is late, a suitable assessment of risk is made, and appropriate arrangements implemented until the check is seen. Improved monitoring of safer recruitment at senior leader and proprietor level now enables effective

oversight of recruitment processes. It has ensured that since the previous inspection, all required checks of new staff have been undertaken appropriately. Staff checks recorded correspond to the details contained in staff files, with all the required data being appropriately entered.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21]**

- 2.9 The school meets the standards.
- 2.10 The school now carries out all required checks on staff, supply staff and the proprietor before they start work at the school. This includes ensuring that all new staff appointed to the school undergo appropriate checks on the medical fitness of staff. Checks are recorded appropriately on a single central register of appointments (SCR). Senior leaders and the proprietor jointly undertake regular checks of the SCR to check its accuracy. The school's safeguarding audits include maintenance of the SCR as an integral part of this review.

### **Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]**

- 2.11 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website and provided to parents on request.

### **Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]**

- 2.12 The school meets the standard.
- 2.13 The proprietor and senior leaders have implemented all of the points in the school's action plan effectively. Appropriate measures are in place to support ongoing compliance, particularly in the case of staff recruitment. The proprietor and senior leaders, together with the recently appointed advisory board safeguarding lead, demonstrate good skills and knowledge to ensure their duties and responsibilities are fulfilled effectively, that the standards are consistently met, and the wellbeing of pupils is actively promoted.

### **3. Regulatory action points**

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this inspection, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations, 2014 and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

## **4. Summary of evidence**

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the principal, senior leaders and other members of staff and had a telephone conversation with the proprietor. He talked with groups of pupils and scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.